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Business

Bud's Warehouse opens

Retail chain specializes in low-prices, name brands

By MARK WATSON
Staff Writer

Bud's Warehouse, the newest large retailer in Lufkin, held its grand opening Friday, and the store manager said the phone has not stopped ringing.

"It has been busy," said manager Larry Lee, who opened Bud's Warehouse, a chain of off-price retailers owned by a relative to the late Wal-Mart owner Sam Walton.

Lee, who comes to Lufkin from a Wal-Mart store in Beaumont, said many of the callers have been interested in employment, but most have been curious about what products may be available.

"We thrive on providing name-brand merchandise for the very lowest prices," Lee said. "We fall into a segment of the retail market known as off-price marketers. We sell a variety of merchandise — everything from cigarettes to cleaning supplies, hair-care products, clothing and frozen food.

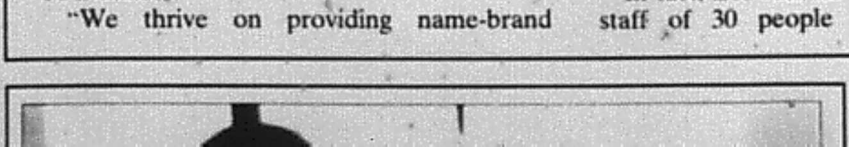
"We carry returned items, damaged merchandise, factory over-runs at as much as 70 percent off of the usual retail price. We also carry first-run merchandise. From time to time, we get special buys, and we want to pass those savings on to our customers. People have taken to it really well."

In fact, Lee said he is planning to add to his staff of 30 people to handle the better-than-expected response.

The store opened for business quietly March 30, saving the grand opening for Friday, he said.

Bud's Warehouse has 14 stores in Illinois, Tennessee, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky and Texas, he said. There are plans to open 12 more stores this year, adding Georgia and South Carolina to the list of states in which Bud's Warehouse operates, he said.

"It seems like everybody here has really responded to our opening," he said. "We want this to be a unique shopping experience every time customers come in. Hopefully, they will find a different bargain every time."



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